

the political crisis will be swiftly and peacefully resolved, the popularly elected government reinstated, and humanitarian needs of vulnerable groups met. Sierra Leone's people have suffered immeasurable through years of civil strife, and the United States also has moral obligation to help prevent an escalation of the current situation into a humanitarian crisis of even graver proportions. To this end, it is essential that the United States remain engaged in Sierra Leone, and continue to bring a full range of diplomatic resources to bear on a peaceful resolution of the current crisis, in coordination with the OAU and the international community as a whole. The future stability of the sub-region as a whole is at stake, since political and humanitarian problems in Sierra Leone spill over into Liberia and other neighboring countries.

Finally, our special recognition and gratitude should go to the many brave Americans and Sierra Leoneans whose heroic efforts made possible the safe evacuation of 2,509 people, 500 of the Americans, who were caught in the crossfire in the harrowing days following the May 25 coup. Their courageousness and exemplary performance in preparing and executing the dramatic rescue operation was nothing short of miraculous. Special mention should go to Ms. Ann Wright, the Charge D'Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Freetown at the time of the coup. At serious risk to her own life, Ms. Wright helped negotiate a cease-fire between rebel forces and Nigerian ECOMOG troops, and secure assurances that civilians would not be fired upon during the evacuation. She worked with the U.S. Marines landing team to organize the safe and orderly transfer of civilians from Freetown to the U.S. carrier *Kearsarge* stationed 12 miles off the coast. Many others deserve credit, but special thanks goes to *Kearsarge* officers Captain Ertel and Captain Wittkamp, and the 22 U.S. Marines led by Lt. Col. Sam Helland for their exemplary courage, efficiency, and professionalism in carrying out the evacuation.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

#### HON. THOMAS W. EWING

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 18, 1997*

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of the 15th Congressional District of Illinois, I would like to extend my congratulations to Coach Dennis Bridges and Illinois Wesleyan University men's basketball team for advancing to the Final Four and winning their first ever NCAA Division III national title.

After 110 years in intercollegiate athletic competition, Illinois Wesleyan University has finally won a national title when it defeated Nebraska Wesleyan University 89 to 86. I recognize and congratulate Coach Dennis Bridges, the winningest active Division III coach, for being named "Division III Coach of the Year" and Bryan Crabtree, for being named Final Four MVP and "Division III Player of the Year."

During their historic season, Wesleyan amassed a school record of 29 wins and only 2 losses, a CCIW championship, and now an unprecedented national title. The accomplish-

ments of this team are truly remarkable in that Illinois Wesleyan University was picked to finish third in the CCIW conference in the coaches' preseason poll. Apparently, the coaches underestimated the emerging Wesleyan dynasty which had the year prior finished third in the Nation.

In recognition of their historic season, I will now list the names of the coaches and players for the 1997 Division III men's basketball national champions: Head coach Dennis Bridges; assistant coaches: Dennis Martel and David Steinbrueck; players: Tony Pacetti, Seth Zeller, Corey Coon, Jason Osborn, Nathan Hubbard, Brent Neibrugge, Kyle Tudeen, Mike Pope, Buck Condill, Bryan Crabtree, Jerry Happ, Andrew Boyden, Matt Hoder, Matt Mann, and John Baines.

In addition to Illinois Wesleyan University's athletic achievements, I would be remiss if I did not point out that Illinois Wesleyan University is fast becoming one of the Nation's most prestigious and selective liberal arts schools. Illinois Wesleyan University is an outstanding example of how higher education can successfully blend a quality academic program with a top-notch athletic program. This point is driven home by the fact that Illinois Wesleyan University ranks third nationally with 82 student-athletes being named to the GTE Academic All-American Team since the program first began in 1970.

Once again, I salute and congratulate Coach Dennis Bridges and the Illinois Wesleyan University men's basketball team, as well as the administration and faculty of this fine institution.

#### A TRIBUTE TO CHIEF BEN SURPRISE

#### HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 18, 1997*

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ben Surprise, a man who has faithfully and dutifully served his fellow citizens of Westfield, MA for the past 37 years as a member of the Police Department.

Beginning as a reserve officer in October, 1960, Ben officially retired as chief on May 31, 1997. During that period he moved from reserve officer, to patrolman, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain. His record is unblemished.

But Ben's service to others was not limited to the range of his cruiser. In 1950 he became a member of the U.S. Air Force and in 1957 joined the Air National Guard being stationed in France during the Berlin crisis. In 1983 he was named NCO of the year, and in 1989 he retired after 39 years.

Among his many citations as a police officer he includes a certificate of appreciation from the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Chief Surprise has been married for 37 years and is the proud father of six children, and grandfather of three.

I am happy today to bring to my colleagues and the Nation recognition of Chief Surprise's life-long service to his community and his country.

He has earned an honorable and long retirement.

#### TRIBUTE TO SEBRINA PALMER

#### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 18, 1997*

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Sebrina Rene Palmer. Ms. Palmer is the recently crowned Miss Alcorn State University for the 1997-98 school year. She is a junior elementary education major from my hometown of Bolton, MS.

Sebrina is actively involved in her community. She is a member of the National Association for the Advancement for Colored People, Alpha Kappa Mu Honor Society, Alcorn State University Ambassadors, a student recruitment organization, and the Student National Educators Association. She has championed the St. Jude Annual Walkathon and Bike-A-Thon as well as the community clean up project and a homeless prevention project.

Sebrina's platform for Miss Alcorn State University was AIDS awareness. She campaigned on the necessity among young people to not forget this devastating and fatal disease. Her goal is to become an elementary school teacher because she believes in giving back to her community.

Sebrina is also a member of the County Line Baptist Church in Pocohontas, MS. She serves as the Sunday school pianist, member of the choir, the usher board, and the Home Mission Institute. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter L. Palmer also of Bolton.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring Ms. Sebrina Rene Palmer, Miss Alcorn State University, 1997-98 school year.

#### ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BROOKLYN HEIGHTS VILLAGE SENIORS CLUB

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 18, 1997*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the dedication and achievement of the many diligent workers of the Brooklyn Heights Village Seniors Club in Brooklyn, OH, on their 25th anniversary.

More than 60 members have assisted the community with a multitude of volunteer work including visiting the sick at hospitals and organizing and running the annual Red Cross blood bank for the village of Brooklyn. In addition to these projects, they have contributed a portion of their earnings to children in little league sports.

The Brooklyn Heights Village Seniors Club volunteers give themselves, and in doing that, they make the Cleveland area a better place. I would like to congratulate this club on 25 years of hard work.